

African Sun

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/11887053) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/11887053>.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham , Hannibal Lecter
Additional Tags:	Post-Episode: s03e13 The Wrath of the Lamb , After the Fall , On the Run , injuries , Hurt/Comfort , Happy Ending , Murder Husbands , Developing Relationship , Murder , Hannibal Loves Will , Caretaking , Will takes care of Hannibal , will graham is done with this shit , A Bit of Fluff , Soft Hannibal , Hurt Hannibal , POV Alternating , #ItsStillBeautiful Fest , Hannibal CreATEive , Schmoop , Cannibalism , Hannibal is a Cannibal , Dark Will Graham , Africa , Adventure , Canon-Typical Violence , do not copy to another site
Language:	English
Series:	Part 9 of Hannibal Cre-Ate-Ive Challenges
Collections:	ItsStillBeautiful
Stats:	Published: 2017-08-24 Words: 5,330 Chapters: 1/1

African Sun

by [DrJLecter](#)

Summary

Hannibal and Will end up on the other side of the world in Africa and face some new challenges, while Hannibal tries to convince himself that Will won't abandon him.

Notes

This is just a little story of how I'm imagining the first weeks to go. At least one version of it, because there are many more in my head. I love the #ItsStillBeautiful fest of the Hannibal CreAtEve and I couldn't let this opportunity pass to celebrate my favourite show and my OTP. These two stupid killers will hopefully be part of my life for many years to come and I can't wait for the fest to hopefully return next year.

Please check out all the other works in the collection and don't forget to leave Kudos and maybe some comments to support writers!

Thank you Llew for the wonderful beta Job :3

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The African sun burned down from the endless blue sky and Will wiped the sweat off his brow with an impatient swipe, before he buried his gloved hands back into the blazing hot remains of the motor block. The white shirt he wore was completely drenched and clung to his skin just like his shorts. His skin burned in the sun where it wasn't covered and red sand and dust stuck to him everywhere. An uncomfortable heat headache throbbed behind his temples and breathing the hot air was an annoying burn in the back of his throat and down to his lungs.

He knew he should have waited until the sun started to set, waiting out the worst of the heat, but they needed the car. Without a car they'd be lost out here, no chance to get any food or other necessities to survive. Their boat was almost out of gas and useless.

Will glanced up to the scattered farm houses between giant acacias. Behind them lay the vast space of savanna before a mountain chain cut it short at the horizon. Red, brown and ochre were the domineering colors, specked with the odd muted green spots of trees where water was closer to the surface. The river was behind a few smaller hills, only indicated by a rising number of trees and bushes.

The place had once been a safari lodge for higher class tourists, bankrupted when the waterhole dried out and the wildlife found other places to migrate to. Not too many people looked for vacations where there was nothing to see. Too far off from the bigger touristic centers in the big national parks of Namibia and without any substantial towns for supplies, it seemed like a death trap and not a holiday spot.

The wooden buildings were in very good shape, still partly furnished in a style that looked home made and expensive and would fit more into Hannibal's house than into his own. The wind turbines powering their electricity system were easily reconnected, which was enough to switch on some lights and appliances and get the pump for their water supply to work. There were some solar panels left on the roofs and Will was planning to take a look at them later. He hoped he could restore more of the electricity circuit and get the whole system back up and running.

There was a small settlement just a few miles away, the only connection a pale and dusty unpaved road. It was nothing more than a tiny gas station and a small red and blue building with the words "Market" and "Bar" on it, but it should provide them with the absolute basics. He'd seen the few dozen huts scattered around the building and Will didn't think they even deserved the label *village*.

A movement on the veranda of the main house caught his eyes.

Will straightened in alarm.

He abandoned the car and jogged up the short dusty path to the house, sweaty feet squishing in his shoes, ignoring the way his whole body ached with barely healed wounds.

“Hannibal, what the hell?” he snapped.

The man was deadly pale and covered in sweat as he stood on the porch, leaning against the balustrade to support his weight, his wheelchair right behind him. Will didn't wait for an answer before he bowed under Hannibal's arm and carefully propelled him backwards and gingerly placed him back into the wheelchair.

He tried not to dwell on how thin and almost fragile Hannibal felt under his hands or the weak grip of his hand on Will's shoulder. He didn't say anything as he stepped behind the chair, fingers gripping the hard leather handles, and carefully pushed him back into the dark and cooler inside of the house. He blinked into the sudden darkness; eyes still adjusted to the glaring sun outside. Will hadn't managed to repair the air-conditioning yet and they'd had to close all shutters to keep at least some of the heat out.

“I just wanted to see if you need anything,” Hannibal said as he let himself be rolled into the wide space of what once probably had been a common room where guests could linger and was now the whole space they occupied.

“You couldn't have done that sitting in your damn wheelchair like you are supposed to?” Will was angry and he knew he wasn't the unreasonable one here. “I didn't carry you and this thing all the way from the river for you to ignore it and be permanently paralyzed.”

“And don't lie to me,” he added with a growl. Hannibal let out a quiet sigh as Will left him in the middle of the room to get some water for Hannibal and himself. The wide kitchen had been clearly built for the purpose of hosting many demanding and well paying guests and once Hannibal was back on his feet he'd definitely appreciate it.

If he ever got back on his feet.

Will frowned as he took a deep breath of the cold air streaming out of the fridge, savoring the coolness on his skin.

They hadn't talked. Not really. The last weeks had been a painful blur, dictated by surviving and getting somewhere safe. He was quite sure Hannibal expected him to leave. It was written in every tensed muscle and blank look. He was trying to brace himself but it wasn't working. Every time Hannibal lost him out of his sight for more than a few minutes, he would come looking for him.

The thought that Will *could* leave whenever he wanted gave him a quiet sense of triumph though. He knew that he's never had as much power over his own life as in these last months, after he finally made up his mind and started to pull Jack's and Alana's strings as he wished, but in the end it had still been Hannibal who moved the figures across the board.

His first truly independent action had been to tip them over the edge of the cliff and he hadn't let go of the reins ever since. Whatever stroke of fate had decided that Will and Hannibal survived that fall; Will had accepted that decision. He had kept them alive, got them on a boat and out of the States. He found them an empty place in fucking Namibia after shipping them over the Atlantic Ocean. The fact that Hannibal still thought he would leave him was grating.

It also created the threat of Hannibal trying to manipulate him and hurt him again to make sure Will stayed. That was something Will had no patience to deal with again.

The man had been shot and thrown off a cliff, but Will didn't feel a lot of sympathy right now. He closed the fridge with a loud thud and went back to the main room where Hannibal's eyes already awaited him.

Will stopped in the doorway and they stared at each other, both unmoving and stiff. The slight hum of the huge ceiling fan was the only sound in the room, accompanied by the quiet drip of condensation that ran cold over Will's fingers to the floor as they regarded each other in the dim light.

Will needed Hannibal to understand that he would not go anywhere. He needed Hannibal to *trust* him. This cautious side of Hannibal felt wrong and ill-fitting.

Hannibal looked away first, his eyes dropping to where small puddles were forming at Will's feet. The tiny frown appearing on his face made Will smile, and he finally moved forwards. The wound on his cheek burned uncomfortably.

He opened the bottle and held it out to Hannibal when he was close enough.

"I should be done with the car in a few days. It's going to be easy to repair after I found what was broken. When it gets less hot tonight, I will go down to the boat and get the parts I need and the last of our rations to last us until I can go to the market."

Hannibal nodded in resignation and gripped the bottle slowly, every movement obviously causing him pain.

"You shouldn't leave the property when it's dark. These are dangerous lands."

Will huffed. "Don't worry. I won't let anything or anyone but you kill me."

Hannibal threw him an unimpressed look and Will just grinned.

He sobered up at the wince he saw when Hannibal lifted the bottle to his lips. Or tried to. After watching the struggle for a moment, he took the bottle out of Hannibal's lax grip and pressed it carefully to his lips. Both of them froze.

The sparse light threw dark shadows over Hannibal's gaunt face, putting his eyes into dark shadows, but Will could feel the shark gaze like an ice cold caress on his skin.

It seemed to be an eternity before Hannibal's lips finally parted and he tipped his head back slightly. Will watched carefully how the cool liquid flowed into the waiting mouth, Hannibal's adam's apple bobbing as he swallowed.

When they separated, the embarrassment of what he'd done threatened to force a blush to Will's face and he felt the urge to go back outside into the heat to bury his head back into the car.

"Thank you, Will."

He stared at the man, cataloging his ragged appearance and the slight smell of medication that clung to him.

“You should lie down. I’ll check your wounds and get your next dose of painkillers. You look terrible.”

Hannibal nodded and let himself be rolled to the wide divan-like couch they’ve been sleeping on for the last nights. Will wondered how much pain he was really in and if a normal person without Hannibal’s self control and strength would even still be upright.

Will lifted him gently to the soft cushions, his own shoulder protesting, but the only indication of how the movements jostled Hannibal’s injuries was a soft intake of breath and the tightening of the grip on Will’s shoulder. Hannibal sank into the woollen blankets with a soft groan.

“You should have said something. There is no need for you to be up. I have everything under control,” Will admonished gently as he rearranged the pillows.

“Being inactive isn’t something that comes to me naturally. This loss of control is hard to get used to.”

“Sucks, right?” Will answered, but there was no real heat behind it and Hannibal didn’t dignify it with an answer. He just closed his eyes and fell still, a deep frown on his face. Will regarded the deep lines around his eyes with concern. For the first time since he knew him, Hannibal looked older than his age.

He got a wet cloth to wipe the sweat off Hannibal’s face, redressed the bullet wounds and gave Hannibal another IV and painkillers despite the man’s protests.

“Shut up. This heat is taking its toll and you need all the liquid you can get. I will make sure we get more supplies when we run low.”

Hannibal did indeed shut up and a few moments later he was asleep. Will placed another bottle of water next to him and following an impulse, he put his fingertips on Hannibal’s forehead and smoothed over the lines he saw there. With a gentle caress, he pushed his fingers through the short hair, grey, almost white in some places. He caught himself hoping that Hannibal would grow it out again.

The tenderness he felt swell in his chest was unexpected and he drew his hand back. Will’s feelings for Hannibal had been a mix of various different things from warm friendship to betrayal, fury, frustration and passion in all its endless variations. Tenderness hadn’t been one so far. He wasn’t sure the monster sleeping in front of him deserved it.

He sighed and rubbed his tired eyes. His body ached and his barely-healed injuries throbbed. He felt as if he’d been awake for years, but the thought of rest and inactivity made his stomach roll. Rest would give him the chance to reflect on what had happened and what he’d done with his life.

Will shivered in dread. Or maybe excitement.

He paced for a few moments, trying to get his internal turmoil back under control.

They needed the car, they needed the last provisions from the boat and they needed to establish contact with someone who could supply them with food and medication.

In the end, he left Hannibal to sleep and forced himself to check their electricity and water systems again before taking their rifle and hunting knife, slinging a backpack over his shoulder and starting the trek down to the river. He didn't think too hard about the knife he'd left next to the sleeping man and how it was the only defense he could provide while being gone.

The heat still caused the air to shimmer all around him even as the sun started to sink towards the horizon and the sky darkened behind him. Soon it would be hard to see in the twilight and the night would be pitch black with only the stars to guide his way while the cold of the desert night chilled him to the bone.

Will planned on being back well before that. He needed to prepare food for Hannibal and check his wounds again. It was only a few miles to the river and another mile to the little spot where trees and bushes were hiding their boat in a little inlet, so the trip should be a short one. Will wished he could have his dogs with him, wondering how they'd react to the wildlife so very different from that in the fields and woods around Wolf Trap.

The shadows had started to lengthen and as if a button had been pushed, the world around him turned on its sounds from one moment to the next. Whispers of insects, rodents and lizards started up all around him and the oppressing silence of the day vanished.

The unexpected sound of voices echoing through the emptiness froze him on the spot.

Nobody should be here. Especially not someone talking in English.

Will crouched down and left the road to find his way through some thorny bushes on the verge. The voices came from ahead of him, right behind a low slope. He could make out two, maybe three different people and they sounded angry.

Will hesitated. He should avoid any direct contact with people, in case anyone might recognize him from the news, but the risk of them catching him walking back or maybe finding the lodge with Hannibal sleeping there sat like acid in his throat.

He decided to take a closer look and gather more information before making a decision.

The sun had set low enough that some boulders on his left threw shadows big enough to hide his movements, so he laid down and crawled forwards on his stomach, fingers buried in the hot red dust.

There were two men. White and with the typical attire for people on a safari. Their jeep seemed to have broken down and their argument was clearly about how to proceed from here. Will was about to turn back and leave them to it when one of them opened the back door of the jeep and he caught a glimpse of what they transported.

Between several rifles, he saw the still form of a killed lion and two mighty tusks, still smeared with blood.

Big game hunters. Poachers.

Will tightened his jaw at the sudden fury lacing through his guts. These people were some of the lowest scum on earth and Will couldn't deny that he'd always wanted to meet some of them personally to show them exactly what he thought of their *hobby*.

The knife was in his hands before he consciously decided what to do and he cursed at himself. With a forced deep breath, he made himself relax.

He couldn't.

It was two against one and he was far away from his best physical condition. He didn't trust his skills with the rifle at the moment either. With a frustrated sigh, he started to inch backwards again.

He'd made it back behind the slope and out of sight when he heard the telltale crunch of heavy boots on the dry ground closing in to where he was kneeling.

With a hiss he rolled sideways and under one of the bushes, thorns scraping over his hands and face. He hoped the twilight would hide him under the sparse vegetation.

It turned out to be only one of them. He was carrying a backpack and a rifle, a huge hunting knife on his belt. They seemed to have decided to split up with one of them staying at the car and the other walking towards the settlement to find help.

Which placed him right on the way to the lodge. There was still an old wooden sign indicating where you had to exit the road to find it and with the situation they found themselves in, Will knew the man would do exactly that.

Will didn't even think. The moment he walked past him, he was on his feet and behind the man. His knife went easily through the soft tissue of his throat and a moment later Will stood next to a twitching body, both hands covered in blood.

He looked down at the dying man as he stared up to him with wide eyes full of panic, hands grabbing for Will's shoes. The arterial spray had created a small river that flowed down the road and had also covered Will's shoes. The gaping wound frothed with bubbling blood as the last remnants of air left his lungs. For a moment there was nothing and then he felt his face pull into a smile. This man would never hunt anything again, especially not endangered species. He had ended the same way the animals he killed did.

Satisfaction thrummed in his chest and Will turned around. The sunset had bathed everything in a deep vibrant red and the mountain chain glowed in a sharp orange while the road ahead already lay in darkness.

The other one was alone now. He wouldn't expect his friend to be back before the following morning, but he would be alert, because you don't drop your guard in places like this,

especially during the night.

Will gripped his knife tighter. With a last look to the still form next to him, he walked towards the spot where the jeep was standing.

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Hannibal woke up to an all-encompassing darkness all around him.

Only the sound of the fan above him and the dusty smell of heat rooted him in reality. He quickly took stock of his body and with relief, he noticed that the pain was reduced to a reasonable level for the first time in days. The IV and sleep had given him back some of his strength after the exhausting ordeal of their escape.

He listened closely into the house, but he already knew that he was alone. Will either hadn't returned from his trip to the boat or he was in one of the other houses to look for useful things they might need.

Hannibal knew that wasn't the case. Will would have switched on some of the lights and it was way past dinner time as well. He had simply not returned.

He took a deep breath to center himself and keep the feeling of dread away. He had hoped that Will would not abandon him before he could take care of himself. He obviously did not want to see Hannibal dead or he would have killed him or let him die on the numerous opportunities he had had since the fall. At least he had hoped so. He wasn't sure which thought caused him more trouble, that Will would leave him or that something had happened to him because Hannibal hadn't been there to help.

With careful fingers, he pulled the needle from his arm, the sting a welcome spark to cut through the throbbing in his chest that had nothing to do with the bullet wound in his gut.

Blindly, he reached for the wheelchair he knew was somewhere right next to him.

Every unnecessary movement could rupture the nerves in his spine completely, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down, but he couldn't just lie here and wait for Will. He might never come back.

The thick lump in his throat made it hard to breathe. He tried to tell himself that it was anger, because that was an emotion he knew how to control and how to deal with it.

His fingertips collided with warm metal and then he'd gotten a grip on the armrest. He pulled the chair closer, but before he could decide for the easiest way to heave himself from the bed, he heard the sounds of an approaching vehicle and headlights brightly illuminated the room for a moment before dimming to a low glow.

Hannibal froze. The light had been enough to show him the knife Will had left him on the seat of the wheelchair, but the intentions were still not clear. Did Will leave it so he could

defend himself in case something happened to him while he was gone or was it another sign that Will wouldn't come back?

For the first time in a while he was dismayed at the fact that he never really knew what Will's plans were and where his mind guided him.

He reached for the knife and placed it under the thin blanket for easy access. Hannibal shifted carefully to get into a position that would give him at least some leverage if he'd need to move quickly.

Then he waited, breath controlled and measured, body as well prepared for as much as a fight as was possible in his current condition.

He could hear the motor being switched off and the light vanished. A moment later the door of the car opened and slammed shut. Hannibal frowned.

The sounds of steps on the gravel in front of the house had him holding his breath and then releasing it in one relieved rush. He would know the rhythm of these steps everywhere, could picture Will walking towards the door perfectly in his head.

The door opened and the entrance light switched on, showing him Will standing there, blood all over his clothes, hair a mess and eyes dark.

He looked like a holy theophany and if Hannibal would have been able to move, he would have dropped to his knees in front of him.

Hannibal could just stare as Will let go of the door and slowly moved towards him. The blood covered his hands and arms and there were small specks on his face. He reminded him of the instance in Hobbs' house when Hannibal had witnessed the beauty of Will covered in blood after having killed for the first time.

Contrary to his shock and fright back then, he was now calm and controlled and Hannibal admired the creature stalking towards him. If Will would kill him now, he would let him, because it was the only way he ever wanted to go. He would die happy.

"Complications?" he finally asked in a hushed voice as Will stopped a few steps away, gaze flitting to the empty wheelchair.

"Didn't make it to the boat. But I did bring dinner."

The words were spoken evenly and without any inflection, and Hannibal needed a moment to process their meaning. He wouldn't have been able to keep the wide smile off his face if he tried when he realized what Will was saying.

"Will...", he simply said, unable to find words for the pressure in his chest that threatened to crush his lungs. Will had killed. Will was back. Will would stay. With him.

Will snorted in reply, breaking the moment of reverence.

“You’re unbelievable. Just tell me if I need to keep to a certain protocol to store two bodies in a freezer for you.”

Hannibal took a deep breath, ignoring the sting in his back and stomach it caused and filled his lungs with the metallic tang of blood, mixed with desert air and sweat. He built a new room in his mind palace, filling it with poetry he knew Will had no appreciation for. He tried to sit up, but a hand on his shoulder pressed him back down.

“Careful,” Will admonished, bending down. Hannibal revelled in the touch and didn’t even try to protest. He waited patiently, heart swelling with happiness, as Will leaned close to lift him into the wheelchair with a grunt. Hannibal finally felt well enough to appreciate their closeness when Will did this. Strong arms around his back and under his legs, the warmth of Will’s strong shoulders under his hands and Will’s breath on his face. The smell of blood mixed with Will’s sweat filled his lungs.

Hannibal had never been this dependant of someone’s care in all of his life and right now, he needed assistance for even the simplest and most basic tasks and he had expected to abhor every moment of it. He hadn’t expected for Will to take on the burden with surprising fervor and no complains. With the added knowledge of Will’s decision to stay with him, he could appreciate it even more. The pleasure of having Will’s full attention on his person almost every moment of the day was beyond description and he now could finally enjoy it to its fullest.

He missed it immediately once he was placed in the wheelchair and Will straightened.

Will pushed him into the huge kitchen where two large industrial sized freezers were placed against the farthest wall, before he went back outside. The metal counters shone in the bright light and Hannibal felt his fingers twitch with the need to open all cupboards and check the appliances. Cooking here would bring him great joy once he was back on his feet.

Will stepped back through the door with his arms full of a lifeless body. Blood had drenched the whole of his clothes and Hannibal could clearly see the cut throat. A clean cut right through to the bone. Beautiful.

“Undress him, otherwise the clothes would freeze to his skin. The best way would be to wrap him in foil or plastic to prevent freezer burn, but this will have to do until I can dissect him.”

Will threw him a sharp look.

“You’ll do nothing of that sort. Just show me how to do it.”

Hannibal tried to keep his pulse at a reasonable pace, refusing to blush with pleasure at Will’s insistence. He watched Will with sharp eyes and he didn’t find any hesitation or doubt. Will looked almost serene as he got to work the body out of its garments.

“Will you tell me what happened?” Hannibal asked after a few moments of silence.

“How hot do you think a fire needs to be to burn ivory?” he asked instead of answering.

It was all Hannibal needed to know.

Poachers. Will's love for animals and his hate for those being cruel to them had been reason enough to kill two men in cold blood without remorse. He'd come so far.

"We need to hide their car after I take the parts I need to repair ours and hope nobody knows where exactly they were hunting. Everyone can get lost here. A simple accident, a small inattention, quickly exploited by lions or hyenas and cleaned up by vultures."

Hannibal smiled with pride at the vicious man as he lifted the naked carcass off the floor to place it in one of the deep freezers before going back outside to get the other one.

Afterwards, they had a simple midnight snack made of the last sandwiches they had left after Will had showered and cleaned himself. Hannibal barely tasted anything. He couldn't keep his eyes off Will and he was glad that the man indulged him and didn't call him out on it.

His whole world seemed to have shifted this night. Gone was the overpowering need to chain Will to his side, because Will was already here. Voluntary. Gone was the bitter tasting fear of being abandoned by the only person he had cared for since his teenage years.

The urgency to control everything in his life had been replaced by the soothing assurance that he wouldn't be alone again and that someone was here who accepted everything he was. Hannibal wondered if he'd ever really been content with his life or if he'd always just expertly lied to himself, for he had never felt at peace with his life as he did now.

It was around one in the morning when they both finally lay down to sleep. Will had helped him clean the dried sweat off his skin and Hannibal revelled in the intimacy of Will's hands on his body, even if separated by a thin cloth.

There never was hesitation in his touches, never has been and Hannibal didn't dare to hope for more. It was more than he'd ever thought Will would give him.

Hannibal had shuffled as close as he could without actually touching and he savoured Will next to him with his senses. The room was dark around them and the only sound was Will's quiet breathing as they'd switched the fan off. The warm smell of his body was pure comfort to Hannibal and he wished he could live in this moment forever.

But then he remembered what had happened today and he felt a fluttering sort of giddiness in his guts. He couldn't wait for the next days. He would teach Will how to dissect a human body, would show him how to prepare the meat. They had enough spices on the boat to create deliciously seasoned cuts ready to grill on the big terracotta oven on the terrasse.

Hannibal smiled in the dark. He reached out with his hand carefully, just far enough to brush his knuckles against Will's bare arm, relishing the heat of his body, convincing himself that he was really there.

Will's breath changed and with a soft sigh, he turned to his side to face Hannibal. He drew his hand back, but didn't get far before a warm palm laid down on his wrist.

He froze and held his breath, waiting for whatever Will would be doing.

His voice was sleepy and rough. “You know I’m not going anywhere, right?”

Hannibal released his breath in a controlled sigh. “I did not want to presume, but I am glad to hear it.”

“You’re an idiot,” he murmured, his words ending in a yawn. His hand tightened on Hannibal’s arm, right over the old scars, before he lifted it to his face and pressed a soft kiss with chapped lips to his fingertips. He put their hands back to the bed afterwards and stroked his thumb over the raised line, causing a shiver to run down Hannibal's spine. A moment later the hand went slack as Will simply fell back to sleep.

His skin felt as if it was burning where the lips had touched him and it travelled up his arm in goosebumps. He wanted to bury his face in Will’s neck and wrap his arms around his back to hold on forever. He never wanted to be separated from this glorious man again and he wished they could truly merge into one powerful creature, forever intertwined.

Hannibal felt the exhaustion crawl up his body again, but he fought against it, not wanting to lose the grip on this perfect reality so soon. He turned his hand around to close his fingers around Will’s wrist in return, feeling the slow and steady pulse under his fingertips.

He let the reassuring rhythm lull him into a healing sleep.

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